

**NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
Deputy Ethics Counselors and Ethics Coordinators
Meeting Minutes: May 8, 2006**

Awards

Discussion centered on clarifying travel awards for Non-FTEs. The Awards Manual Chapter is currently in revision and includes a section for Fellows (non-employees) which will cross reference with the ethics awards chapter. All cash awards must be sent through the ACD and any cash awards over \$2,500 must be vetted through the NEAC for approval.

Outside Activity Exceptions

The next item discussed revolved around the exception process for outside activities with SAOs. Even if the employee is not directly involved they can still benefit from their spouses activity in the organization or company. NEAC does review exception requests but please remind your employees that submitting the request is not a guarantee that it will be approved.

Official Duty Chart

To increase flexibility and put the responsibility on the employee and supervisor, we are proposing a policy change that allows Official Duty Activities to be approved by the supervisors, with ethics officials available for consult. A table, cases studies, flow chart and summary are being drafted to explain the policy and educate employees on real (18 USC Section 208) and apparent (5 CFR 2635 Section 502) conflicts of interest.

Administrative Items

There are over 100 employees using the NIH Ethics Enterprise System (NEES) to file their 278 forms this year and the system seems to be working very well. There have been no error reports recorded and a few, minor glitches, which were easily dealt with. The NEES committee will address the HHS 520 form next and the OGE 450 form once it has been finalized.

Please remember to send a reminder to your 278 filers to have their forms submitted by COB Monday, May 15, or if they need an extension, remind them to request it prior to that deadline.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:02pm